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Army Pre-Positioned Stocks (APS) Ready for Action

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Our expeditionary Army is designed to move fast and hit hard. To speed our forces to the fight, the Army Sustainment Command (ASC) maintains combat-ready equipment and materiel, strategically pre-positioned around the world and ready for issue to Soldiers at a moment's notice.

A combat-ready Cavalry Stryker rolls off the USNS Shughart, one of ASC's supporting fleet ships holding pre-positioned equipment — all part of the Army's global strategy for expeditionary operations. (U.S. Army photo.)

Rows of up-armored High-Mobility Multipurpose Wheeled Vehicles are ready to be loaded on a ship. These types of ships serve to maintain pre-positioned equipment. (Photo by CPT Chris LeCron, 841st Transportation Battalion.)



Theory was put to the test in 2003 when APS were issued to troops in Iraq. *Operation Iraqi Freedom* is the first war in which frontline troops were equipped largely by APS. Troops stationed in CONUS were flown to Southwest Asia (SWA) and matched up with forward-based APS equipment.

The APS program's primary mission is to reduce the initial amount of strategic lift required to support a predominantly CONUS-based force projection Army and to sustain Soldiers until traditional lines of communication are established. To meet the mission, stocks are forward-positioned in six countries and afloat aboard ships.

APS are a strategic asset owned by the U.S. Army. Depending upon the situation, APS use can be approved by the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Chief of Staff of the Army, or the Department of the Army G-3/5/7.

Working through its global network of Army Field Support Brigades (AFSBs) and battalions, the ASC stores, maintains, issues, and resets APS equipment. AFSBs coordinate the reception and issue of APS units and secondary

items during the theater opening phase. AFSBs also perform repairs and modification work orders on equipment in theater as required.

The Army's Global Pre-positioning Strategy requires that simultaneous support be provided to more than one contingency in more than one theater.

Expert planning and management of the four categories of APS is called for to meet this need. These categories are: pre-positioned unit sets, operational project (OPRJ) stocks, Army War Reserve Sustainment (AWRS) stocks, and war reserve stocks for allies (WRSA).

Pre-positioned unit sets consist of equipment configured into mission-driven sets (including authorized stockage lists, prescribed load list, and unit basic load) and positioned ashore

and afloat to reduce deployment response times.

OPRJ stocks are materiel above normal table of organization and equipment, table of distribution and allowances, and common table of allowance authorizations tailored to key strategic capabilities essential to the Army's



PFC Timothy Lewis, Charlie Co., 1st Battalion, 27th Infantry Regiment, 2nd Stryker Brigade Combat Team (BCT), 25th Infantry Division (ID), takes cover from small arms fire in Tarmiya, Iraq. (U.S. Air Force photo by TSGT William Greer.)

ability to execute its force projection strategy. OPRJ stocks are designed to support one or more Army operations, plans, or contingencies.

The AWRS stocks are procured by the Army in peacetime to meet increased wartime requirements. They consist of major and secondary item materiel designated to satisfy the Army's wartime sustainment requirements. They provide minimum essential support to combat operations and post-mobilization training beyond the capabilities of peacetime stocks, industry, and host-nation support. AWRS stocks are pre-positioned in or near a theater of operations to be used until wartime production and supply lines can be established. These stocks consist of major end items to sustain the operation by replacing both combat losses and supplies consumed in the operation.

WRSA, a program directed by the Office of the Secretary of Defense, ensures U.S. preparedness to assist designated allies in case of war. WRSA assets are pre-positioned in the appropriate theater and are owned and financed by the U.S. They are released to the proper Army component commander for transfer to the supported allied force under provisions in the *Foreign Assistance Act* and under existing country-to-country memorandums of agreement.

The five regional storage sites for APS are as follows:

- APS-1 (CONUS) includes OPRJ stocks, sustainment stocks, and ammunition.
- APS-2 (Europe) includes pre-positioned sets, OPRJ stocks, ammunition, and WRSA.
- APS-3 (Afloat) includes stocks aboard ships that have pre-positioned



An infantry squad disembarks a UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter at Forward Operating Base Warhorse, Iraq. ASC's pre-positioned unit sets ensure Soldiers have prescribed load list and basic unit load to accomplish their mission. (U.S. Army photo by SFC Jeffery Troth, Combat Aviation Brigade, 11ID.)

sets, ammunition, OPRJ stocks, and sustainment stocks.

- APS-4 (Pacific/Northeast Asia) includes pre-positioned sets, OPRJ stocks, sustainment stocks, ammunition, and watercraft.
- APS-5 (SWA) includes pre-positioned sets, OPRJ stocks, sustainment stocks, ammunition, and watercraft. This set has been heavily deployed and is in continual operation.

The Future of APS

APS's rule in the future is one of continual change, driven by world events and changes in Army force structure, while anticipating the Army's potential needs on a global scale. In Europe, plans call for APS-2 to establish a Heavy Brigade Combat Team (HBCT) while maintaining select OPRJ stocks and WRSA. APS-3 is scheduled to provide for two Army Strategic Flotilla Infantry BCTs with wheeled augmentation sets and two Army sustainment brigades. The APS-4 in Korea has equipment and materiel for an HBCT supported by a customized sustainment brigade, Army watercraft units, medical support units, and OPRJs. APS-5 will be reset to meet the U.S. Central

Command's requirements. It will have an HBCT, two sustainment brigades, a fires brigade, OPRJ, Army watercraft units, and medical support units.

As the Army transforms to a modular, expeditionary force, APS are likewise adapting to maintain their crucial role. All APS are configured as standard BCTs. Equipping early-arriving combat forces with matching APS equipment is critical to preserving the receiving unit's fighting capabilities and minimizing training and sustainment challenges.

APS strategic capabilities are needed to support and meet the DOD Joint Swiftness Objectives and associated deployment goals. APS provide the means to rapidly employ an expeditionary Army by delivering combat equipment and support materiel when and where they are needed.

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